

# AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA



Mary Glowrey, M.D.  
Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart  
Society of Jesus,  
Mary, Joseph

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By

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## *Foreword*

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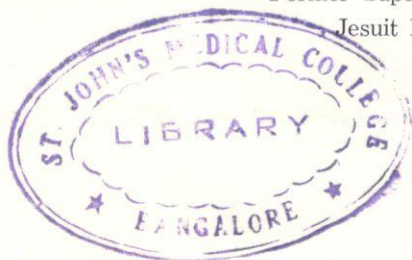
There is something which completely captures our imagination and strengthens our faith in Divine Providence in the story of the life of Dr. Mary Glowrey, who became Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart.

As Australians we can be proud that our country has produced a woman of genius, in whose life shines forth those virtues of charity and self-sacrifice, which have adorned the lives of some of the greatest saints.

Mary Glowrey, a gentle Australian girl, so corresponded with God's grace that she became a truly valiant woman, whose name is held in honour and veneration in the country of her adoption, India, and no less in her own native Australia.

It is not too much to hope that this short account of her life may be the means of leading others to follow in her footsteps.

Austin Kelly, S.J.,  
Former Superior of the Australian  
Jesuit Mission in India.



## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

### *Neighbouring Lands*

**I**NDIA! What does it mean to Australia? What has it meant over the years? Is the meaning the same now as it was, say, fifty years ago?

Two lands, comparatively near each other in the layout of the world and yet so different in their geography, their history, their peoples.

These countries really have always been quite near as the ship sailed but are nearer now that the aeroplane flies. Samoa and Brisbane are scarcely further apart than the southernmost tip of India and North-West Cape of Western Australia. And yet most Australians think of Samoa as a nearby island, in *their* part of the world — the South Pacific — forgetting that the Indian Ocean washes the shores of the west side of their continent and India is on that ocean's northern shores, a near north too.

Not so far from that southernmost tip of India, in northerly and westerly directions from Madras, a city well known to the world, are two lesser-known cities — Guntur and Bangalore respectively. They will appear much larger than even Madras in the life story that this booklet concerns.

Before we enter them, however, we must return to Australia and look at it again, first in our own period, the 1960s, then moving backwards to years that ran through the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth century.

### NEWLY FORGED LINKS

Australians of the present time are probably much more aware of India than they were fifty years ago, of India and Indians, of Asia and Asiatics in general. The Colombo Plan and other schemes have brought many South Asiatic students to Australia.

In the streets of Melbourne, of Perth, of Sydney, saris and turbans are a quite frequent sight all the year round. In holiday time, some of the students visit country homes, invited



## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

guests of hosts and hostesses who try to give a little home life to lonely young people far from their families and at a loose end while the universities and schools are shut unless they go travelling round to see as much of Australia as they can (which some do if they have enough money). And while the educational establishments are open, Australian and Asiatic students, including many Indians, study together, live together as at International House, Melbourne, where University students of many nations learn to know each other, to help each other in work and at play.

There are many Asiatic nurses doing courses in Australian hospitals, educationalists pursuing post-graduate studies, technicians finding out how to give their respective countries modern industries that will help their struggling economies, and among all these there are Indians.

On the other side of the picture there are Australian students visiting India and other south Asiatic countries in their long vacations, seeing how these other people live, trying to help them where they can in all ways in which they want to be helped, fast plane travel making such exchanges much more possible.

Famines in India have made present-day Australians aware of the physical discomfort and tragedy stalking that heavily populated land. The newspapers have publicized the recurring crises, governments are moving and being moved by public outcry to send what relief they can, to try to prevent repetitions of the hunger problem by showing how scientific husbandry and irrigation can cause more food to be produced. Australians know what droughts mean. They suffer them themselves often; they are just now recovering from a very severe drought in which millions of stock died. Hence they realize the Indian distress enough to contribute to Milk for India Appeals and Wheat for India Funds originated and kept going by Australian men and women who have been deeply concerned that their fellow-human beings are in such a terrible plight. They have, in fact, though certainly on a smaller scale than now, been giving aid in Indian famines for at least a quarter of a century.

Not only an awareness of the physical need but of the spiritual distress has been gradually formed in Australian

## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

minds by devoted Christian missionaries who have spent many years and often lifetimes endeavouring, under Almighty God's guidance, to bring hope and happiness to a huge nation. Hitherto they were few, and only a handful of Australians were among them, but now their example has had good results and Australians in far greater numbers are hastening to the aid of India's millions.

### FIFTY YEARS AGO

What did India mean to Australians fifty or sixty years ago? They learned about it in geography and history books and lessons, knew of its teeming cities and crowded countryside, its jungle beasts, its hot climate, the highest mountains in the world, but little of its history. Some Australians — not so many travelled abroad then — called at Bombay, sailing to Europe or returning from it. They must have been saddened by many of the living conditions, even if they were enraptured by the palaces and processions of the rich. But if they voiced their opinions in Australia, they do not seem to have had startling results.

India was, to the majority who were interested, the India of Kipling. Its glamour shone through his poems and stories. It was the land of "The Jungle Tales", of Kim and his Lama and the colour of the Grand Trunk Road, the land of resplendent rajahs.

What did it mean to Australian Catholics then? It must be realized that Australia was just emerging from its own pioneering era. Many Australian Catholics had never seen the inside of a Catholic school. There were, of course, various convents and boys' colleges, primary schools, too, in the cities and big towns. But most Catholics who lived in the country, and many in the towns too, had not had the advantage of them. Their chief information about the mission countries would come from priests and the Catholic press. If they did not read Catholic newspapers and books, or attend Mass every Sunday, which many of them, through distance, could not do (realize that the motor age had hardly begun) their Catholic education could not, in many cases, but be scrappy.

## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

If they had studied Church History, Australian Catholics would know that St. Thomas the Apostle first brought the Christian Faith to India, that his body was originally interred at Mylapore, near Madras, and that Christianity had survived there in a sound way over the centuries. They would know of St. Francis Xavier's visit and conversions in India in the Sixteenth Century, of Portuguese trade there and Portugal's rule of Goa, on the west coast from Renaissance times to the modern years and of the many converts the religious orders had made there. They might, if they lived in Australian cities, see the Catholic Goan crews of overseas ships visiting Australian churches, or, if they travelled on such overseas ships as those of the P. and O. line, know of the Goanese crews' chapels on these ships.

Those who had some knowledge of the Missions knew that Catholic missionaries were still working in India. Some had a definite picture of their labours if they were educated by an Order that had missions there. Some — I was one — would see girls from their school go to India to work as nuns in mission schools, see nuns who had taught them leave for India too.

The emphasis seemed to be on Christian education there then. Were there such institutions as Catholic hospitals in India, were there doctors and nurses there? On that point we seem to have been ignorant. Did we even enquire?

## AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITIES IN THE EARLY 1900s

At the Australian Universities in the earlier part of the Twentieth Century there were no students from Asia. They did not begin to come till well after the Second World War. And in the first decade or so of the Century there were very few Australian women at these universities. Women were just beginning to break into the learned professions. They had to battle against social opposition to a higher education for women. As teachers they more readily won recognition. But as lawyers and doctors, for instance, they were long frowned on. They had to prove their capabilities.

Among the early women medical graduates of the University of Melbourne was one Mary Glowrey, a Catholic, who, like



## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

other Catholic students there, had not had the advantage of a Catholic university college, because there was none there till 1918.

At that time she knew no more about India than most of the educated Australian Catholics I have mentioned. She was soon to know much more about it than all but a few Australians, perhaps more than any of them. She was to live in one of the least glamorous parts of it, night and day, giving her body and soul to the hardest work in a climate the hottest in the whole land and hotter than almost any part of Australia, a mixture of that of the famed north-western Australian town, Marble Bar, the Central Australian deserts and moist tropical Darwin. She was to stay there thirty-seven years and to die not far from the district after a long and very painful illness, for the sake of sick and poor Indians whom she saw made in the image of Christ, whether Christian or non-Christian, and as brothers and sisters under the Fatherhood of God. She went there for the love of God and to sanctify and save her own immortal soul. She had been called by God to serve Him in a land very different from her own and to give up much comfort and expectation of worldly success for His sake. Let us see who this unusual woman was and exactly what she did.

### THE EARLY YEARS OF MARY GLOWREY

Mary Glowrey was born at Birregurra, near Colac, in the Western District of Victoria, Australia. The township, and the bigger town near it, had been given Australian aboriginal names by the early white settlers, but Mary Glowrey, like most of their inhabitants, was of European descent. Her parents were Australians but her grandparents were Irish. Her father's father had come to Australia from Dublin. His mother, who had come from Cork, was a doctor's daughter and Mary herself thought that this family interest in medicine might have had some influence on her own choice of profession. Her mother's parents had come, one from Limerick and one from near it. Her mother's father was a surveyor, teacher and grazier. He and his wife conducted St. Mary's



## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

School, Geelong, about 1850-51 and he taught at Colac while holding land in the vicinity.

June 23, 1887, was the date of Mary's birth. She was the third child of the family. The eldest, a boy, had died before her birth. The second, Lucy, who in adult years became Mrs. Thomas Peter Connellan, and a younger sister, Eliza, were the close companions of Mary's early years. There were more children later on, one of whom was to become a priest, well known and loved in the Ballarat Diocese of Victoria, the Reverend Father Edward Glowrey, later a Dean, who died in 1950. Two younger brothers, Messrs. Harold and Gerard Glowrey, are still living. There were nine children in all.

Mary owed her name to her godmother, Mrs. Nehill.

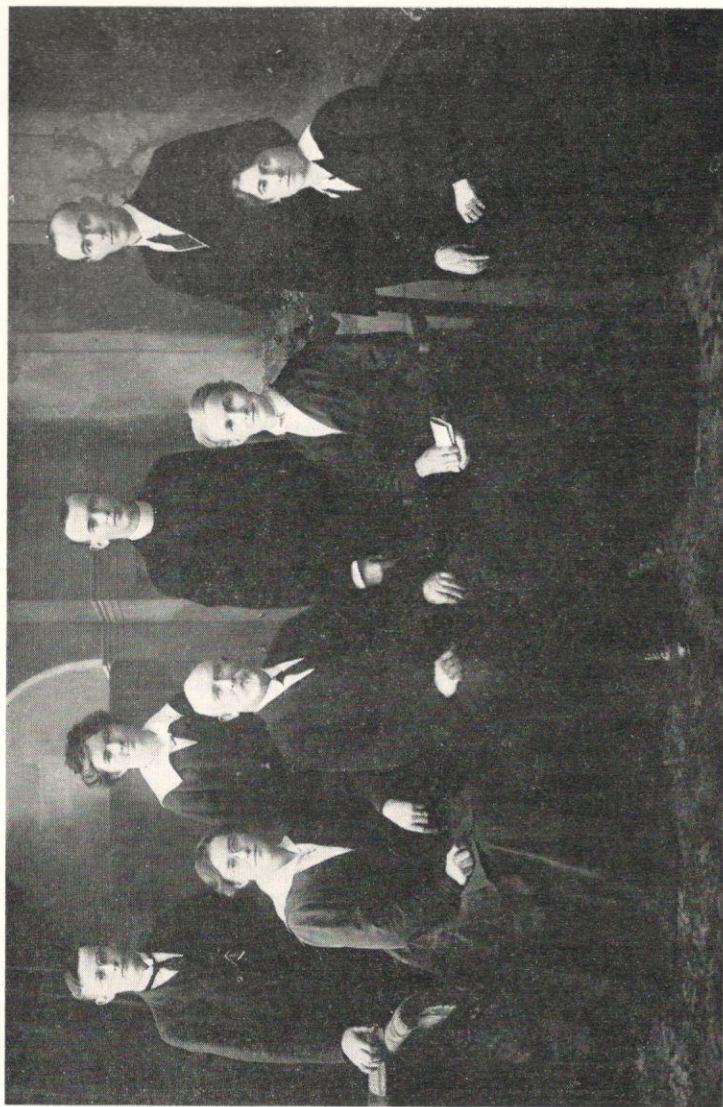
"That is a privilege for which I could never sufficiently thank her nor Our Blessed Mother Mary," she wrote near the end of her life. Her heavenly Patroness certainly led her gently and surely to the Heart of her Divine Son.

Mary was not to remember Birregurra, unless she ever returned there in her girlhood, for when she was five months old the family moved to another township some miles away, Garvoc, her father's birthplace, where they stayed till she was five years of age. The reason for this move was her grandfather's retirement. Her father now managed his businesses, a store, a hotel and several properties in the district.

One of the chief events of this period, perhaps the chief event, was her aunt's consecration of Mary to Our Lady. She developed an extremely bad throat through diphtheria and one night appeared to be dying. The aunt begged Our Lady to pray for her cure. The morning after the consecration the throat was normal.

Each night the Family Rosary was said and with it a prayer for priests and doctors. Mary Glowrey, many years later, recalling that practice, wrote, "When my brother and I were respectively priest and doctor, I sincerely hoped that many another mother added that 'trimming' to the Rosary."

In those days of large Australian parishes and few priests, Garvoc had Sunday Mass only once a fortnight. Going to Mass — the church was not very far from her home — was



*Glourey Family at Ordination of Fr. Édouard Glourey, 1918.*

## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

one of the few memories Mary Glowrey carried away from Garvoc.

The next move took the family right out of the Western District, well over one hundred miles north-west, to the hot, dry Mallee region of Victoria, a good training place for a future hot-climate missionary. They had to go there because, her father's health having become poor, his doctor advised a drier climate. They settled at Watchem, another township with an Australian aboriginal name, said to mean wattles, i.e., the beautiful golden-blossomed Australian trees, which apparently flourished in the district.

During their first year in Watchem, then a very tiny, new township, there was no school of any kind. But Mrs. Glowrey educated her children in domestic knowledge — taught them to cook simple meals, make jam, sauces, etc., even soap and candles. She also taught them to sew by hand and with a machine. They enjoyed the training. She had been a teacher.

This good mother also trained them well in religion. Mary felt that she was very indebted to her mother for telling the children that they must always pray for grace to do the Holy Will of God. Led to ponder deeply on her mother's advice, Mary saw that sin would be overcome by doing God's Will and that one would always do that which pleased Him. The petition became her constant prayer. It must have led to the grace of her being able to obey God's call to her difficult lifelong vocation.

Mary Glowrey's first contact with Indians came during her childhood at Watchem. Those were the days when occasional Indian hawkers travelled round the Australian countryside selling clothes, linen and small goods to outback people far from shops. Mr. Glowrey was very kind to the ones who came to his district and allowed them to camp on his land. They did most of their cooking at their own campfires but used to make their chapaties (of unleavened bread) at his big kitchen fire. The children used to watch their methods of cooking entranced. Though Mary taught the Indians an occasional word of English, it did not occur to her to ask them to teach her Indian words. Even a smattering of an Indian



## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

dialect would have been useful to her when she began her work in India.

Her childhood continued rather uneventfully, on the whole, in Watchem, which gradually grew larger. At first her father engaged a Catholic lady to teach his children and the few other Catholic children there were included in her classes. But when a State primary school was opened in the township the parish priest closed the tiny Catholic private school and the rest of Mary's primary schooldays were spent in the State school.

She made her First Communion and was confirmed at nine years of age. She had her first experience of serious worry when her father met with financial disaster connected with his Garvoc properties which nearly ruined him. It was realized that the Glowrey girls would have to equip themselves well for earning their living. The local teacher, Mr. Harry Gill, later an inspector, trained them after school in certain secondary subjects. His interest and their capabilities led to Lucy's becoming a pupil teacher in the Education Department and Mary's winning one of the new State secondary scholarships. She came third on the list of forty candidates in the whole State of Victoria.

The use of the scholarships was limited to certain schools and Mary had to leave home to attend the school selected for her by her parents and teacher, a co-educational secular day school, South Melbourne College, conducted by Mr. J. B. O'Hara, M.A. (who also had made a name in Australian Literature as a delicate lyrical poet). The school was in South Melbourne, hundreds of miles away. Mary Glowrey was able to board at the Good Shepherd Convent, Rosary Place, in the same suburb, and so came for the first time under the influence of nuns. They had no school there then.

When she matriculated, she was too young to be accepted by the University. She repeated the Matriculation course, in other subjects than those in which she had passed, and so gained a very wide education. She won a University Exhibition, a valuable cash prize, which was very welcome to the family.



AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.



*Mary Glowrey, 14, at the time of her Matriculation.*

## *University Years*

AT the University of Melbourne Mary Glowrey, following her literary interests, began to study for her B.A. degree. Her father was anxious for her to do a medical course, though it was an unusual one for a woman to take then. But a local doctor, when Mary discussed the change with him, told her that the study of medicine would deprive her of all womanly dignity. Mary was in a quandary about changing courses. She kept praying to the Sacred Heart to show her what to do, for she still loved her Arts course. A new young doctor in her home district showed her that if a young girl were not unwomanly to begin with, "she need never become so through the study of medicine". Mary was not yet converted but she went on praying. It is clear she was being slowly led to her life's vocation.

Finally, she decided to take up Medicine though she risked losing her Exhibition if she failed in her first year. With constant prayer reinforcing her brilliant talents, she mastered her new subjects and, after a few years' study, graduated triumphantly as M.B., B.S. in 1910.

During her time at the University the Catholic medical students, upset at teaching and practices contrary to the Natural Law, approached their priests with their problems. Archbishop Carr of Melbourne was then absent in Europe but he published a booklet — "Infanticide" — concerning the matters that were worrying them and Very Reverend Dean Phelan allowed them to make use of it. Dr. Glowrey had written it. Reverend Father Mangan, who was then studying at the University of Melbourne, with a group of eighty Catholic students, founded the Newman Society for Catholic University graduates and under-graduates and it is still doing untold good there. From it grew the request for a Catholic University College and Newman College was opened in 1918, with St. Mary's Hall as its women's hostel. St. Mary's is now a college in its own right — St. Mary's College — on a different site, next to Newman College.

AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.



*Mary Glowrey in Academic Dress.*



## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

### MARY GLOWREY'S FIRST YEARS AS A DOCTOR

Dr. Glowrey's first medical appointment took her a little distance away from Australia. She applied for a position as a resident doctor at the Christchurch Hospital, New Zealand, and was accepted. This, she wrote many years later, "caused a little stir in New Zealand, firstly because the appointment was given to one who was not a New Zealander and secondly because I was the first medical woman to be granted an appointment in New Zealand." She gained valuable experience there for a year then returned to Melbourne, to the Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital.

Before long World War One had broken out and many doctors were with the armed forces. Dr. Glowrey by then had her own successful private practice in Collins Street east, the street then and now the Harley Street of Melbourne. But much of her time was taken up relieving for the doctors who were in military service. She had still certain duties at the Eye and Ear Hospital and made it her home so that she was on the premises at night and certain other times for emergencies. In addition, she became Physician to Out-patients at St. Vincent's Hospital, the Catholic public hospital of Melbourne. It was also a clinical school for medical students.

### THE FOUNDATION OF THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S SOCIAL GUILD

While Dr. Glowrey was perfecting her medical practice most conscientiously, what little leisure she had for rest was taken from her by the hand of God. Less than seven years after her graduation as a medical and surgical bachelor, the Catholic Women's Social Guild was founded in Melbourne, in October, 1916, and she was persuaded by its founder, the Very Reverend Fr. Lockington, S.J., to allow herself to be nominated as its first General President.

The Guild, the objectives of which were to be social, educational and charitable, was to help, chiefly, Catholic women and children, the priests in their parishes, and all others who needed its aid, and to make Catholic women's influence felt in public affairs. It was the first large-scale organizing of



## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

Catholic women in Victoria, though it had, as a model, the Catholic Women's League, founded a little time before in Adelaide, South Australia. The aged Archbishop of Melbourne, Most Reverend Thomas Carr, was very anxious for it to function and Fr. Lockington applied his great energy to drawing all Catholic women into it. Two very important lectures by him in St. Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne, preceded the actual foundation. A Central Committee was placed at the head of the new body and Dr. Glowrey was elected General President.

Twelve sincere and talented women were on the chief committee. There is not room to mention all here but among them was the first Honorary Secretary, Miss Maud O'Connell, who, several years later, founded the Company of Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament (familiarily known as the Grey Sisters), which looks after families when mothers are ill either at home or in hospital. Sister O'Connell died in 1965. She deserves a pamphlet to herself and is sure to have one or, more likely, a full-scale biography.

Another was Dr. Eileen Fitzgerald, who had so much to do with the opening of the Guild's holiday home for sick and poor children, SANTA CASA, at Queenscliff, by the sea. Dr. Fitzgerald later became Chief Medical Officer of the Victorian Education Department. She was a lifelong friend of Dr. Glowrey. They kept up a regular correspondence.

There was also Miss Anna Brennan, LL.B., a pioneer Australian woman lawyer who practised in Melbourne up to the time of her death at an advanced age in 1962 and was one of the founders of St. Joan's Alliance, political, non-party (for Catholic women) in Melbourne.

What energy Dr. Glowrey gave to her responsibility! She was constantly addressing meetings, both in the metropolis and in country centres. She wrote frequent articles on health for the Guild's monthly paper, *WOMAN'S SOCIAL WORK*, which, after her time in Melbourne, became *THE HORIZON* and is still flourishing. She gave medical lectures in town and country, presided at C.W.S.G. annual conferences and carried on the heavy administrative duties of a rapidly-growing organization.

## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

One of her happiest successes must have been the spread of the Guild to her own Ballarat Diocese, in particular, to her own home district in the Mallee. Branches at Watchem and the towns near it were among the earliest to be established in the country, though she herself did not open all. Miss O'Connell is recorded as having opened some.

Her part in the C.W.S.G. ended early in 1919 with a health breakdown. She resigned from the Presidentship. The Guild newspaper, regretting her illness and resignation, commented: "Those who know most intimately the work that Dr. Glowrey has done for the Guild feel, not only regret, but also something like remorse because we know that her tireless labour in the Guild's interests has been in part responsible for her temporary breakdown."

There were other reasons for this and for her resignation, however.

While she was carrying on this strenuous social work in addition to her medical practice, she had been studying for a higher medical degree. She had more than an ordinary professional reason for doing this but that was still her secret. The degree was M.D. — Doctor of Medicine. She passed the examination for it in 1919. The subjects were gynaecology, obstetrics and ophthalmology, so she was now very well equipped as a woman's physician and surgeon and was a doctor in fact as well as in courtesy title. The degree was not conferred till December 23, 1919. A month afterwards she left Australia again, on a longer journey.

Even then, only Dr. Mary Glowrey's family and a few very close friends knew that she had gone, where she had gone and why. To let you into the secret, allow her to take you back five years or so.

In her brief autobiography, written in her last illness at the request of her Superiors, Dr. Glowrey made these remarks: "It was during this busy period" (i.e., when the war was giving her so much extra medical work, but, note, a whole year before she became the first C.W.S.G. President) "that God deigned to give me my religious vocation. On October 24, 1915, I attended Holy Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral.

## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

The day was being celebrated as 'Hospital Sunday'. The occasional sermon was preached by Very Rev. W. J. Lockington, S.J., who took for his text the words, 'Honour the physician for the need thou hast of him'. The eulogies heaped on members of the medical profession only served to humble me. From the Cathedral I went to my rooms in Collins Street. On the hall table there was a small pamphlet addressed to me by the Rev. Donal A. Reidy of Ballarat, who had formerly been a curate in Watchem.

"It was not until 11 p.m. that I returned to the Eye and Ear Hospital. Out of mere curiosity I began to read the pamphlet, 'Dr. Agnes McLaren,' by Mary Ryan, M.A. (B226. E.C.T.S., 1915). Dr. McLaren was one of the pioneer medical women of England. At the age of sixty-one she became a Catholic. At the age of seventy-two she went to India to establish a Catholic Hospital for the care of Indian women.

"From association with the Protestant medical missionaries Dr. McLaren knew that, as a general rule, Indian women would on no account submit to examination by a medical man. Medical women were exceedingly few. Dr. McLaren desired to organize a method of providing medical relief for the suffering women of India. She established a hospital in Rawalpindi and entrusted it to the care of a medical woman and some lay-helpers.

"Monsignor Wagner, Prefect Apostolic of Kashmir, was a warm supporter of her efforts."

Dr. Glowrey tells how, through reading the pamphlet, she learnt that Dr. McLaren tried to find a religious order which would admit qualified medical women or allow suitable members to qualify and practise in the missionary hospitals. Her ideas were, however, regarded by many as an audacious novelty or an unpractical dream, by others as good but very difficult to follow out.

Anyhow, the approval of the Holy See was necessary for such a change in mission work and Rome would have to look into the matter very carefully. This persistent woman — Dr. Agnes McLaren — made five journeys to Rome to put her theories before the proper authorities. The Bishops of India backed her efforts.



## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

Dr. Glowrey came to the conclusion that God wanted her herself in India. She finished reading the pamphlet on her knees.

She began to look about for a Spiritual Director to advise her. She did not know to what part of India she should go.

In the middle of the next year, 1916, her friend Fr. Reidy sent her a copy of an American magazine, the Jesuits' *AMERICA*, which contained a letter from Most Rev. Dr. Aelen, Archbishop of Madras, to an American doctor, begging the Medical Mission Board of New York to educate medical women for the missions, for they were badly needed in India. Dr. Glowrey showed this to Fr. Lockington, S.J., who forthwith made enquiries of Archbishop Aelen. The Archbishop cabled one word — "Come".

A letter from him soon followed telling of the work of the Sisters of the Society of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, whom *he* had brought to India from Holland in order to give nursing help to Indian women and to teach the children in schools.

Dr. Glowrey was anxious to go at once, but, on account of the war, she could not. It was then that she set out to gain the M.D. degree so that her mission work would be more efficient. Her acquaintance with Fr. Lockington led to her taking part in the establishment of the Catholic Women's Social Guild in Melbourne during her years of waiting.

Perhaps the greatest joy she had during her last years in Australia was the ordination of her brother Edward to the priesthood in May, 1918. He spent his life in the Ballarat Diocese holding some important administrative posts and died prematurely as Dean Glowrey in December, 1950.

Her parents were, of course, among the few who knew of the great change of purpose coming over Dr. Glowrey's life; two of the first to know. She wrote to them in far-away Watchem explaining her plans.

"I pointed out," she writes, "that I owed my vocation entirely to them — to my Mother who taught us we must pray to do the Will of God, and to my Father, who perseveringly asked me to study medicine. Then I received a beautiful letter from each of them in turn. When I did not go immediately my



## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

Father asked me did I change my mind. It was at this time that I was very busy."

Just before leaving Australia, Dr. Glowrey made a Retreat at the Convent of Mercy, Goulburn, New South Wales. Fr. Lockington gave the Retreat and told the nuns about her intentions.

Her Spiritual Director, Fr. Lockington, thought that she should, perhaps, go to India first as a *lay* medical missionary. He corresponded with fellow Jesuits in India trying to find out what was best and they sided with him. But Mary Glowrey said, after a lay position in the Missions had been offered to her, that it was not her wish to take a paid post.

She left Melbourne by ship, the "Orsova", for India on January 21, 1920. She learnt later that this day was the first Wednesday of a Novena made to St. Joseph for nine successive Wednesdays before his Feast, March 19, by the Sisters of the Society of Jesus, Mary and Joseph in India each year. Among their intentions was *medical* help for their missions.

Dr. Glowrey reached Madras on February 11, the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. There, staying with the Presentation Nuns, she met Archbishop Aelen of Madras, who had been so anxious for her to join his Dutch Missionaries, and who welcomed her in no uncertain way.

The following day she set out by train for Guntur, where the Dutch nuns were working. From now on, almost to the end of her story, Guntur becomes The Place.

### DR. GLOWREY'S ARRIVAL AT GUNTUR

At the Guntur Convent she was received with great joy and affection and soon shown around the nuns' buildings and the town, including the Public Hospital, where the nuns formed the nursing staff. But first they had taken her to their church. There she noticed a fine statue of the Sacred Heart with arms outstretched. She was soon to take the name Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart, so it always had a special significance for her.

At the end of this first day in Guntur Mary Glowrey joined the Congregation.

## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

### WHAT WAS THIS ORDER DR. GLOWREY HAD JOINED?

Mrs. Lucy Connellan, Dr. Glowrey's sister, tells the history of the Society of Jesus, Mary, Joseph briefly in a short biography she wrote some years ago.

The Society was established in Holland in 1822, at a time when religious orders were banned there. So, for their first twenty years, the Sisters had to wear secular dress. "Their purpose was to impart Catholic education to girls of all grades of society, to care for the sick and the aged, and to engage in other charitable works as required." The Mother House was at "Marienburg", Hertogenbosch, in the Netherlands, but is now at Vught, in the same country. Since the General Chapter of 1962, the Society has been divided into provinces and regions.

In 1898 the Sisters began their first mission work in Asiatic regions — in the Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia). They were hampered there at first but later established schools and hospitals in the Celebes. Their chief work was the care of the poor. The first hospital developed from a dispensary in 1910.

The Indian foundations of the Order date from 1904. Madras then had an Irish Archbishop, Most Rev. Dr. Colgan. His Coadjutor was the same Archbishop Aelen who later invited Dr. Glowrey to come as a medical missionary. Being a Dutchman, he was well acquainted with the Society of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, which he brought to Archbishop Colgan's notice as a suitable instrument for the missionary work needed in the outskirts of the Diocese. The Dutch Sisters were soon installed in Guntur, far inland from Madras, their convent a small Indian house.

First they opened a tiny orphanage, an institution badly needed, which they hoped to expand as quickly as possible. Medical help was badly needed for the orphans and the district people, so they opened a small dispensary on the little veranda of the convent.

Once the Indian people began to come to this in numbers the nuns realized the terrible plight the Indian women were in. They were entirely bereft of skilled medical help, for

## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

on no account would a respectable Indian woman submit to examination by a man, let alone accepting his services at the time of child-birth. The infant mortality rate was appalling. Most babies died before they were three months old, chiefly in the first week of their lives, and there were many still births. Even fifty years after this time, with more hospitals functioning in the land, 500 Indian women were dying in child-birth every day.

The nuns realized that they must help these women throughout their pregnancy and at their children's births. As nuns in those times did not practise midwifery they engaged an educated Catholic lay midwife, who attended the women in their homes or huts, and the nuns later visited and helped them and their babies.

The nuns, at the Archbishop's request, trained some young Indian women to become members of a diocesan Congregation. They were sent to a hospital to train as midwives. Later on, they were canonically admitted to the Society of J.M.J.

By 1911 Dr. Aelen had succeeded his Archbishop in the See of Madras and he obtained special permission from the Vatican for the Dutch Sisters who were already trained nurses to train as midwives for their urgent missionary work. They were probably among the first Catholic nuns to do this work.

In 1914 the Sisters were selected by a prominent Brahmin surgeon of the city to take charge of the nursing in the Guntur Public Hospital. They also visited the sick in their homes.

When Dr. Glowrey arrived in Guntur in 1920 the Society of J.M.J. had no hospital of its own there but the nun nurses' experience of the difficulties surrounding many Indian mothers made them realize that they must open a hospital and bring the women there for their babies' births. But they needed a woman doctor to take charge of it and so they were most grateful when God answered their prayers by sending Dr. Glowrey.

Later on, when their own hospital was established, the nuns gave up nursing in the Public Hospital. Afterwards they opened hospitals in Bangalore and other centres in the Archdiocese of Madras and nearby dioceses. They also established schools, for they had many trained teachers among them.



## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

The present Mother-General of the Society, Mother Marie de Montfort, has contributed the following summary of its history and objectives.

### A FEW POINTS ABOUT THE SOCIETY

In the world's community of men the Society of J.M.J. tries to fulfil the assignment of the Church in apostolic service. Founded by Rev. Father Mathias Wolff in 1822 in the time of the emancipation of the Church in Holland, it had as its foremost aim the intellectual uplift and development of women. That is why it dedicated itself to the education of girls, providing for general and domestic science education at all levels.

As far as education was concerned the Society opened a training college in the early decades of the twentieth century to provide trained staff for schools.

By the side of its pioneering in education, the Society saw the great need for nursing the sick and caring for the lonely aged and the imbecile. Hence it saw the necessity for training nurses and doctors in Holland and in the Missions to staff these hospitals. Help was asked and given for the care of the physically and mentally handicapped, for the needy aged living all alone, for assistance of all kinds in families, especially in the poorer quarters of the towns in Holland. It is the principle of the Society to render service where the need is the greatest and would remain unrelieved but for the service of religious.

This apostolic spirit urged the Society to go beyond the bounds of its home country and found schools and hospitals and institutions for social service in other lands irrespective of race, caste and creed. Work in the villages for the poor is a special feature of its service, also catechetical instruction as a help to the priests in the missions. The mission of Indonesia was started in Tomohon in 1898 and it now numbers 12 houses; India has now 10 houses; the first was opened in 1904 in Guntur; the first Australian Convent was founded in Narrabundah, Canberra, in 1960, and by 1966 there were three houses.

The Society fosters indigenous vocations in apostolically-minded girls who wish to dedicate their lives to God and thus

## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

share in the Society's work for the extension of the Kingdom of God. The strength for this universal love for the world and the Church is to be found in the undivided union with Christ, with Whom the Society wishes to glorify the Father by constructive work for His Kingdom.

At present the Society has in Holland 1559 members, Indonesia 220, India 280, Australia 25, Africa 22, Rome 10, making a total of 2116 members.

### DR. GLOWREY'S FIRST YEARS AS A RELIGIOUS

Dr. Glowrey proceeded with her religious training in much the same way as all nuns do. However, some of the circumstances were unusual.

There was no novitiate of the Order in India and she would have had to do her novitiate in Holland had not Archbishop Aelen obtained special permission from Rome for her to do it in Guntur, as her medical skill was so badly needed there. So she was the only postulant and had the privilege of living with the professed nuns.

Before she was *received* into the Order, on November 28, 1920, Archbishop Aelen had also obtained Vatican permission for her "to do all medical work in *bonum animarum*" and Pope Pius XI bestowed a special blessing on her medical mission work. This permission was a great innovation, for nuns up to this time had not been allowed to practise as doctors. So Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart, as Dr. Glowrey had now become, was *the first nun-doctor missionary*. It was not till 1936 that the general ban on religious doing medical work was lifted by Rome, though a few other special permissions were granted in the meantime.

She made her *Temporary Profession* in 1922. When she came out of the novitiate, one of her first contacts with the world was to receive a magazine from the Women's Medical Service of Northern India full of discussions on Dr. Marie Stopes and her birth-control propaganda.

"Only one pen," Sister Mary records, "was wielded against her and that was from the Principal of Lady Harding Medical College. This college had been established principally by

## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

Presbyterian Medical Missionaries to enable Indian women to study medicine."

Sister Mary was invited to join this medical association. *There were no Catholic medical missionaries in India at that time.*

Sister Mary, after watching for some time the birth-control propaganda and other dubious opinions being expressed, decided that a *Catholic Medical College in India* was an absolute necessity. She worked all her life in India to attain that aim. She prayed all her life in India for the fulfilment of that need.

### SISTER MARY'S PROFESSION BRINGS MORE SCOPE FOR HER MEDICAL WORK ST. JOSEPH'S HOSPITAL BEGINS

AS a postulant, Dr. Glowrey did a little dispensary work, but as a novice did no medical work at all, for almost all the time was occupied with the usual religious training of a nun. She also had much language training to do. English, *her* native language, was scarcely known in Guntur, even by most of the Dutch nuns. She had to learn to speak Dutch in the convent and Telegu, the local native language, to her patients. She had to become proficient in Telegu, for a scientific woman must be exact and a doctor cannot allow any room for misunderstanding her directions and questions. She was soon to have hundreds and thousands of Telegu-speaking people to deal with.

Here is a picture of Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart Glowrey as she began her medical work in earnest after her profession as a nun. She had one small room with a small veranda in front as dispensary. The veranda was also the patients waiting room.

"Inside the room," she herself writes, "was a table with three bottles containing a few drugs, namely, Sodium Bicarbonate, Potassium Zibrate and Epsom Salts. There was a tiny cupboard made of boxes which contained a few instruments, all that the Sisters possessed."



## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.



*Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart (Dr. Glowrey) with two trained midwives and a Dispenser.*

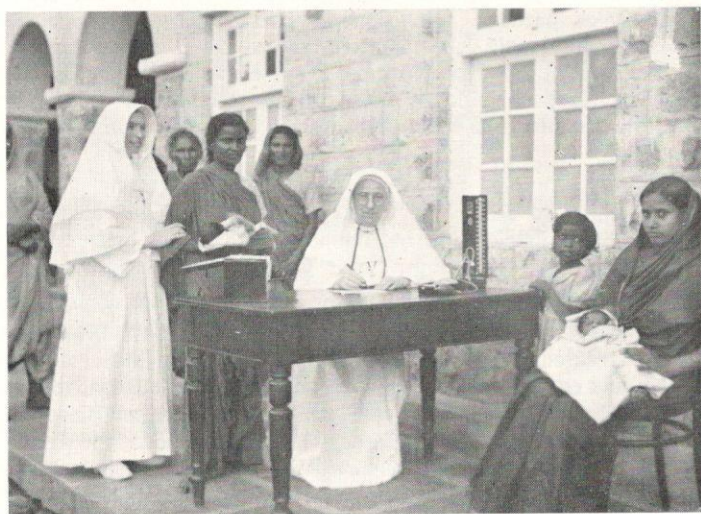
As the trained nurses of the Convent were busy in the Public Hospital, Dr. Glowrey had to carry on with an untrained staff. They did admirable work, she said, and God blessed the dispensary "in a wondrous way". Later on, a true dispensary and an outpatient department were built and she had to deal with large numbers of patients. This is her account of the developments:

"There was so much work to be done and so many patients, I could work day and night without stopping. An additional piece of land was later acquired and a small hospital was erected in 1921. This was used as an outpatient department first, and later we used one of the rooms to admit a patient. Two beds were put in it. In 1925 the foundation-stone of our St. Joseph's Hospital, Guntur, was laid and the inpatient department was built and our first hospital inpatient was admitted for treatment."

## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

Soon a few private patients were admitted to the original outpatient department, but still there could be no trained nurses on the staff. From then on the hospital continued to be in a transitional stage until 1931, at the time when Rev. Mother Jacquellini became Superior of the Mission.

The nuns began training compounders (dispensers) in 1925. By 1929 the Surgeon-General of the Indian Government had recognized St. Joseph's Hospital as a training school for women dispensers. Sister Mary (Dr. Glowrey) was their tutor. The hospital was also training nurses, including midwives. Sister Mary lectured to them. She was also teaching science in the nuns' high school, as no other qualified science teacher was available. The Surgeon-General also appointed her medical inspector of St. Joseph's High School and the Director of Industrial Schools made her auditor to St. Joseph's Industrial School. At the schools she apparently also lectured in Physiology, Health and Hygiene, and gave lessons in First Aid and Home Nursing. She was also Medical Officer in charge of Health Week.



*Sister Mary and some out-patients.*

## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

At St. Joseph's Hospital, of which she was in charge all this strenuous time, the number of outpatients, by 1929, exceeded 40,000 annually. The daily number of inpatients was forty, limited to this by lack of accommodation. At the same period a report of a Melbourne hospital showed that for an equivalent amount of hospital work there were five resident and forty visiting doctors.

Sister Mary wrote at that time:

"This does not mean that I do the work of forty-five; far from it. But it does mean that if forty-five medical women were to offer their services we could find work in plenty for all."

A modest statement on her part. But just think of what she *was* doing all those years — *one* doctor for all those patients, all the lecturing and teaching she had to undertake, and all her religious duties as a nun to be performed. And, no annual vacation to relieve the strain.

She not only worked in the hospital and schools, but often visited outlying villages if an urgent call came for her from a very sick patient. Conditions in these villages were often difficult. She would have to stoop low to get in to her patient in a small straw hut with only an earthen floor. Barber midwives in such villages often caused women in childbirth to die of tetanus and other diseases by using cow dung to stop bleeding.

Frequently many mothers who had lost as many as ten babies came to Sister Dr. Mary in Guntur. Her reputation filled all the district and beyond it as she saved their babies for them. Even rajahs put their wives under her care.

Not only was she a good doctor but, as Mother Jacquellini of her Order describes her, a loving mother to her patients.

"She treated everyone with the same care. She won the hearts and confidence of all. Incurable patients found a special place in the heart of Sister Mary. She did all in her power to give them some relief. Sister Mary was indeed a living example of Christian charity to all those who came in contact with her. She forgot herself entirely and sacrificed herself whole-heartedly in the service of others."



## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

Most of her patients were not Christians and many conversions resulted from her example, with God's grace. Some were death-bed Christians, but many were the women she had brought back to health and their families. Often, as the result of the J.M.J. nun nurses' and her kind visits to the outlying villages, whole villages became christian.

After ten or more years of battling as the only doctor for so many patients, Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart received most welcome help from Heaven, for the all-understanding God had given another medical missionary vocation to Australia and India.

In 1932, *Dr. Ethel Pitt*, also a graduate of the University of Melbourne, who had been practising some years in various parts of Australia, including Ballarat, and who desired to become a medical missionary, heard of Guntur when she asked for help from the editor of *THE AUSTRALIAN MESSENGER OF THE SACRED HEART*. Dr. Pitt joined the Order as soon as she could.

She also laid aside a brilliant future to give her life to the Missions. She came of a Melbourne family, several members of which have won distinction in Australia.

Dr. Pitt did her novitiate at Tomohon in Celebes. She became Sister Veronica of the Holy Face. Like Dr. Glowrey, Dr. Pitt had to go apart from her medical work for a while during her spiritual training.

However, by 1934, we find evidence of her assisting Dr. Glowrey (Sister Mary) in St. Joseph's Hospital. They had to cope not only with maternity cases and the usual diseases but an epidemic of smallpox swept over the area and took 100 to 200 lives. Indians did not become immune through vaccination or a previous attack. The two nun doctors learned very much that no medical book gave about smallpox in its many varied forms and the contacts and treatment.

Like Dr. Glowrey, Dr. Pitt had to wrestle with the intricacies of the Telegu language in order to make proper contact with her patients. Like her she quickly mastered them.

However, the respite of an assistant doctor was not to be for long. Sister Veronica soon had to travel on elsewhere in the service of Almighty God.

## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

In 1936 Sister Mary (Glowrey) wrote home to her family telling of her and other nuns' visit to Bangalore, some distance off, in search of a suitable site for a convent. It was a beautifully-situated city, with a climate like that of Ballarat, Australia, for it was 3000 feet above sea level, and so well above the enervating tropical heat of the Southern Indian plains.

The Convent was finally established there that year. Then the nuns began a hospital of which Sister Veronica (Pitt) was soon put in charge. She was still there in 1966, having carried on for many years in the same heroic way as Sister Mary at Guntur.

In 1936 the Vatican made a general rule that nuns might practise medicine, so Sister Veronica had her way cleared for Bangalore. Sister Mary, of course, had been exempt from the old ban since 1922.

Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart was now left alone again to carry on the huge medical responsibility for St. Joseph's Hospital, Guntur. She had little leisure for writing letters or reading. She tried to scribble short letters home, for example, in the few minutes while a patient was mounting the examining table, and she read while she walked from convent to hospital and back, trying to keep up with the latest medical books. Nevertheless she managed to keep in frequent touch with her family, especially her parents, with whom in their Golden Wedding celebrations she rejoiced and whom she consoled in their old age and final illnesses.

## THE WAR AND POST-WAR YEARS

The Second World War before long was raging. It brought much trouble to the nuns at Guntur, especially after Holland was occupied by the Germans. Financial help from there was interfered with and Dutch vocations for the Missions likewise were thwarted. The Dutch Sisters in India were very worried about their families' safety.

Sister Mary's letters home became very short and irregular because of the many war restrictions. Her father died during this period (February, 1942). It must have been a great sorrow to her to be so far away from him in his last days. Her

## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

young niece, Mary Connellan of Narwie, Balranald, New South Wales, Australia, also died in December, 1941.

The sadness of the partings was over by the time Sister Mary's Silver Jubilee occurred. The Twenty-fifth Anniversary of her entry into the religious life was publicly celebrated, by order of Bishop I. Mummadi of Guntur, on April 5, 1945. The Bishop wished to be present at it and was able to go. The Archbishop also came from Bangalore. Both were Indians. It must have been a great joy to Sister Mary to have the native hierarchy there. Thirty priests were also present at the nuns' day of entertainment, which was, of course, preceded by a Jubilee Mass. Sister Mary received a gift of 9000 rupees (about £700 of those times) towards the cost of extensions to St. Joseph's Hospital, for which she was most grateful, the extensions being greatly needed.

Of the praise showered on her at this function, Sister Mary wrote, "the personal flattery cannot blind me to my own shortcomings. Meanwhile, please help me to thank God for having deigned to use His poor 'good for nothing'" (a nickname bestowed on her in her childhood) "so many years."

However, in spite of her humility, Reverend Father Peter of Guntur's words in his Jubilee address were true. He referred to her devoted and selfless work over twenty-five years in stemming the tide of mortality and suffering among the helpless women and children of Guntur and district.

Reverend Mother Angelina of the Society of Jesus, Mary and Joseph wrote to the Glowrey family of Sister Mary at this time, "That good soul is far too busy. . . . What a fine work her Reverence does and how much more she would do had she only the time. Although fifty-nine years old now she is still full of energy and zeal and acts as one of twenty-five years. May God give her strength to carry on still many years. . . . Oh! we need lady doctors so badly, ones with the spirit of self-sacrifice."

By this time the annual number of midwifery cases at St. Joseph's Hospital was approximately 3000, with one doctor to look after them and all the general cases as well. The hospital, by then, had been approved by the Madras Govern-



## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

ment and registered by the Nurses' Council as a Training School for Nurses.

There had been food rationing during the war and it continued after it because of famine conditions caused by drought. Sister Mary, in one of her letters home, remarked that "most people live constantly on the border-line of starvation."

"Malnutrition," she said, "is our biggest trouble even in normal times. . . . The better fed eat rice and curry twice a day; many will now have to be content with one meal."

Her doctor friends, including Dr. Eileen Fitzgerald, the Catholic Women's Social Guild, her own family and other friends in Australia did what they could over the next several years to alleviate the conditions at Guntur.

Soon after the war had ended, the nuns at Guntur had the relief of receiving a new Australian postulant who was a qualified Pharmacist and Sister Mary shared directly in this for soon she would have a trained person in charge of the compounding. In the early years she had done the training herself, but later doctors were not allowed to do so. She had, in order to save her poor patients expense, used many Indian drugs in her pharmacy and been very successful with them.

The postulant was Miss Margaret Barrett, another Melbourne woman, who became Sister Peter Julian, and is still in charge of the Guntur St. Joseph's Hospital Pharmacy.

Yet another Australian, a treble-certificated nurse, Miss Kathleen Monaghan, from Claremont, Queensland, had joined the Society in 1939 and become Sister Anne Patricia. She died early in her religious life.

St. Joseph's, through Sister Mary's efforts, gained recognition as a training centre for "Compounders", i.e., Dispensers, who did a one-year course. It was later (1960) superseded by a Diploma Course. The Pharmacy Act of 1948 sought to prevent the selling and dispensing of drugs by unqualified persons.

In these post-war years, Sister Mary had to bear more family sorrows from afar. In 1947 her aged mother broke her hip and, as a consequence, died of pneumonia. Sister Mary's letters were a wonderful spiritual help to Mrs. Glowrey in her last illness. Her sister Eliza, after a long, painful illness, died

## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

in 1949 and her priest brother, Dean Edward Glowrey, P.P., V.F., of St. Arnaud in the Ballarat Diocese of Australia, whose vocation she had done so much to foster, died suddenly at the very end of 1950. Preaching at his Requiem Mass, the Bishop of Ballarat, Most Reverend Dr. O'Collins, said, "He was the last we should have expected to go. . . . We could ill afford, in this diocese or in Australia, to lose a priest of his quality. He was saintly, a gentleman, a zealous pastor and, beyond these traits, he was a wise counsellor, a comforter of the sick and a devoted, much-loved friend of the children of his flock."

In 1950, Sister Mary obtained more relief in her hospital work through St. Joseph's being able to obtain the services of a lay woman doctor, Dr. Barretto. Her presence did not mean that Dr. Sister Mary spared herself much but that the two of them could now do more to help the multitude of very ill patients. A Victorian hospital she quoted then had 150 doctors for fewer patients than at St. Joseph's.

## THE CATHOLIC HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION AND THE CATHOLIC MEDICAL COLLEGE OF INDIA

While tracing Dr. Mary Glowrey's career up to this time, I have purposely omitted dealing with two very important interests of hers. They are so important in her life-story that they need a special section to themselves. You will remember, however, the previous references to her early concern over the un-Catholic medical ethics being advocated in India — and elsewhere — and her inspiration that an Indian Catholic Medical College was a necessity. When, after years of experience in an Indian hospital, the opportunity presented itself she began working feverishly to attain her objectives. We can only surmise all the prayers that accompanied her endeavours. The Divine aid given her may be seen in the results today. She made contact with all the Indian Catholic hospitals she could (there were very few), with the Indian clergy, the Indian Hierarchy.

The first development was the Catholic Hospitals' Association of India. The Guntur nuns of her Order say of it, "In fact, she created this Association out of nothing — for at that time

## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

Catholic Hospitals scarcely existed in India. Under Sister Mary's inspiration and determination it eventually came into existence in 1943. In Guntur the first meeting was arranged and a very small group of Medical Missionary Sisters attended. A small number of Congregations were represented and they were all from the Madras State, and Guntur at that time belonged to that State." The Holy Father's approval was sought and given to the Association.

Thus the Catholic Hospitals Association was established. Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart Glowrey was appointed its first President, a position she held till 1951 when ill health forced her to resign. She then became Vice-President.

The same writers tell us more of Sister Mary's connection with the Association. "Sister rarely missed the Annual Conference even if it meant a few days' uncomfortable travelling. In October, 1956, she was confined to her bed of suffering but she had the great satisfaction of hearing that the Annual Conference held in Calcutta had been the most successful up to date. There were forty-eight delegates present representing twenty-two Religious Congregations from all parts of India. Incidentally, in 1964 at the C.H.A. Conference, held in Bombay during the Eucharistic Congress, there were 200 Delegates present.

"At the Meeting in 1956, a resolution was passed that Sister Mary, the Foundress and first President of the C.H.A., be given title of 'President Emeritus', to be bestowed on her in grateful recognition for all she had done for the Association throughout its existence. During her later illness the C.H.A. had a very special intention in her suffering prayers."

During her period as President, Sister Mary organized Catholic doctors and nurses throughout India into Guilds and contributed to their better knowledge of the medical teachings of the Church either by writing articles or giving conferences wherever she could.

A Catholic Hospitals Magazine named *THE CATHOLIC HOSPITAL* was established and was a splendid means of keeping members in touch with one another and of giving Catholic



## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

medical and nursing teaching in written form which could be filed for reference. It still exists under the name of *MEDICAL SERVICE*.

In the C.H.A. one of Sister Mary's most interesting meetings was with Sister Dr. Anna Dengel, an Austrian, also drawn to a medical mission vocation by Dr. McLaren. She trained in Cork, Ireland, as the Indian Government would accept only a British medical degree. She also went to India in 1920 but as a lay mission doctor, and to the North, in the Punjab, to Dr. McLaren's hospital, St. Catherine's, at Rawalpindi. (Dr. McLaren had died in 1913 but her hospital had been carried on after her death.) In 1925, convinced also that mission doctors needed to be nuns, with American help she founded the Society of Catholic Medical Missionaries, in Washington, D.C., U.S.A. The Society, under Dr. Joanna Lyons, took charge of Dr. McLaren's hospital, in 1926, and later, when it had more members than the original two, built its own hospitals in Northern Indian cities and, eventually, in other countries. Its headquarters are now in Philadelphia, U.S.A.

At the Bangalore meeting of the C.H.A. in 1944, Sister Mary brought forward the idea of establishing an Indian Catholic Medical College. She spoke very trenchantly on the urgent reasons for beginning it quickly. In addition to the ethical reasons, she knew that Catholic medical students were finding it difficult to be included in quotas for other Indian medical colleges because these could cope with only a limited number of students. All the Bishops of India were very keen on the idea and brought the planned scheme to the attention of the Apostolic Delegate for India, asking him to approach the Cardinal Prefect for the Propagation of the Faith so as to obtain financial help on the large scale necessary. His Eminence Cardinal Fumasone Biondi contributed 10,000 dollars for the College.

Dr. Anna Dengel supported Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart zealously in working for the Medical College. Every year the project was on the agenda of the C.H.A. meeting and given priority. But finance was one of the chief obstacles.

## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

Dr. Sister Mary was not to live to see the College opened, though she worked unceasingly for it till she could work no longer, then prayed and offered her sufferings. St. John's Medical College was opened in 1963, in Bangalore, where Sister Mary had died and where her grave is. One of her fellow Sisters was among the first group of students admitted to the College.

## *Sister Mary's Journey to Europe*

IN 1952, Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart was elected to the General Chapter of the Society of Jesus, Mary, Joseph. She accompanied Reverend Mother Jacquellini, the Regional Superior of the Order in India, to Holland for the election of the Mother General. Mother Jacquellini had been forty-eight years in India without a break.

There had to be many negotiations with the new independent Indian Government before they could leave, for by then it was difficult for a foreign religious to enter or re-enter India.

In August the two nuns went from Madras to Calcutta by air, a new experience for both, and flew on to Holland by K.L.M., then a twenty-five hours' journey, and were welcomed at "Marienburg", at that time the head house of the Society.

Not only was Sister Mary busy with the elections. She had to enter a Netherlands hospital for a major operation which, though immediately successful, was the prelude to the years of suffering that were to end her valuable life. Her sister, Mrs. Connellan, knowing of Sister Mary's illness, travelled from Australia to Holland and was near her during most of her European stay.

When Sister Mary had recovered from the operation she, with other nuns of her Order, went to Eire (Ireland). Her chief motive in the visit was to see if, pending the establishment of the Indian Catholic Medical College, Indian nuns could train as doctors in Cork, Eire. She was able to meet Monsignor Reidy of Tralee, the priest who had put her in the way of her vocation in Australia, and who helped her again now in her quest. She interviewed Irish bishops and University Presidents but failed to win this privilege for the Indian nuns.

After returning to Holland for a while, Reverend Mother Jacquellini and Sister Mary went to Rome. They were very disappointed that they could not have an audience with Pope Pius XII, who was very ill at the time, but they visited many places of interest and had discussions with various Prelates and Heads of Religious Orders and Sister Mary inspected the



## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

main hospitals. The Medical School for Missionaries was discussed. Mother Mary Martin, Foundress of the Medical Missionaries of Mary, came from Naples to meet her and discuss mutual problems.

After this invigorating change, the nuns flew back to India. The first re-union with their own Missions was at Bangalore. Madras was visited, then the Order's other convents and hospitals, by now extended to Nellore, Kurnool, Sathanapally and Porumilla. Returning then to Guntur, Sister Mary recommenced her medical work at St. Joseph's Hospital. This was in March, 1953. Her sister stayed with her in Guntur for four months, gaining a good knowledge of the mission work. At this time all the wells were dry for there had been a four-years' drought. Water had to be brought in tanks on carts from twenty miles away. The drought broke in late Summer.

### HER FINAL YEARS: WORK AND ILLNESS ALTERNATE

In September Sister Mary had to enter St. Margaret's Hospital, Bangalore, in charge of the Sisters of Mercy, to have a cataract removed from her eye. This operation was successful. Her eyesight had been bad for years but she had never complained about it.

In December still another operation — this time in Madras — was necessary. About this Sister Veronica and the Reverend Mothers were very upset for it concerned a growth, as the Netherlands operation had. There appeared to be no malignancy, however, and Sister Mary was soon back at her Guntur medical work, at which she was busy for a year or two more. In Europe she had been able to secure some much-needed hospital equipment and this was now a great relief to her.

As time went on, though, she felt her health deteriorating again and had to suffer a fourth operation — at the nuns' own hospital at Bangalore. When discharged "she made a desperate effort to be her former self", as one of her nuns has put it. Because a new doctor, a laywoman, was coming to St. Joseph's Hospital, Guntur, she wanted to be there to welcome her and so she was allowed to return.

## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

She tried to go on as she had been doing for so many years but the disease was fastening itself on her and she suffered great pain. She had much difficulty in walking and often had to retire to bed each day for hours that she wanted so badly to give to God through her medical work.

However, she who had always desired only to do God's holy will was henceforth wanted by Him to do it in a new and terrible way.

The final years of her life were to be given to the Apostolate of bodily suffering. She was being asked physically to share Christ's Cross. She had laid the foundations of the medical mission work at Guntur and others, by now, were capable of carrying it on in the emergency though there was no other nun doctor. She had laid the foundations of the Catholic Hospitals Association of India and others were now able to continue the work. She had long desired, worked for and prayed for the establishment of the Indian Catholic Medical College and her Divine Master sought her physical sufferings to make this possible.

During 1955 and the early part of 1956 her condition was becoming much worse, for the cancer was beginning to affect her bones and was causing Sister Mary acute suffering. She found writing very difficult but continued to deal with her very large correspondence.

One of the J.M.J. Sisters describes the scene in the sick room: "To the amusement and perhaps annoyance of the Nursing Sisters, her bed was covered with papers of every conceivable kind. In fact, it was like a paper stall in a little disorder. Sister Mary always possessed a dry sense of humour and shared in the remarks passed in her presence, but no improvements came.

At last her condition became so serious that her Superiors decided that Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart must leave the unbearably hot plains of Guntur and go to their mountain hospital at Bangalore to be under the care of Sister Veronica (Dr. Pitt).

Leaving the area of her life's work was a dreadful wrench for Sister Mary, but she was a pattern of perfect obedience

## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

in going without a murmur. With *her* medical knowledge she must have realized that there would be no return.

In April, 1956, Sister Veronica and one of the Dutch nursing Sisters escorted her to their Bangalore Convent and there she spent the last suffering year of her life.

It was not long till she was completely bed-ridden. Despite the constant intense pain in her spine and limbs, she tried to occupy every waking moment of her day. She was alert to all that went on in the Convent and took part in all the religious exercises she could share. Her Rosary was continually by her and was used very frequently.

Part of her time was given to the translating of the revised Holy Rule from Dutch into English, a task set her by the Reverend Mother, who knew she must have some work to occupy her mind. When any movement of the arm became too difficult — her left arm she could not move at all — she had the Holy Rule Book suspended above her bed and turned over the leaves with a stick. She had to lie flat on her back. Yet she worked on correspondence connected with the Catholic Hospitals Association and, at the command of her Superior, she wrote her autobiography. Thus Sister Mary progressed in her apostolate of suffering.

On November 21, 1956, the Feast of Our Lady's Presentation, she was sent a new and lasting cross. In trying to help her nurse, she grasped the rail of her bed with her good right arm. But the bone had become brittle under the influence of the cancer and the arm broke. The doctors long tried to mend it but without avail. This accident meant the close of her writing career. She just had to lie on her bed bearing her suffering, daily becoming worse, accepting God's Holy Will, which she had always sought to do, with perfect resignation, her only regret, in her own words, "I have not done enough. I could have done more." But where would she have found time to do more?

In Holy Week, 1957, Sister Mary took a turn for the worse. She was glad to be sent the extra suffering at the time Our Lord's Passion and Death were commemorated.

Sister Veronica, her doctor, had gone away to Guntur on the Palm Sunday, as a special treat and rest to mark *her*



## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

Silver Jubilee in the Order. On her return, it was decided, with Sister Mary's backing, for she did not want it to be postponed on account of her own grave condition, to celebrate the Silver Jubilee at the Bangalore Convent of J.M.J. on the Low Sunday. Sister Mary had written verse at intervals throughout her life, and now, despite the pain she was in, she composed songs for the occasion, and listened to the Sisters rehearsing and their singing of songs at the celebrations. She had asked the Sisters to pray that she would live till this great event of the Jubilee was over and her loving Master allowed this grace.

The following week Sister Mary became very much worse. It seemed apparent that her death was approaching and Rev. Mother Jacquellini at Guntur was notified. But at that time it was impossible for her to leave there, much to Sister Mary's disappointment. Rev. Mother Edwiga and a Sister companion went from Guntur instead, so that some of her old Guntur companions would be with her. Then an unexpected improvement took place in the dangerously ill patient and the nuns returned to Guntur, for there was urgent work to be done there by the Reverend Mother, who had to return to Bangalore at the end of May to take part in a Retreat for Superiors. They left on May 2.

When, a few days later, an urgent telegram was sent to Guntur saying that Sister Mary's condition had become critical, Rev. Mother Edwiga and Sister Peter Julian had gone on to the Sattenapalle Convent, where Rev. Mother Jacquellini now was to inform her of Sister Mary's improvement. Someone else was sent on to try to intercept them. But it was God's will that they passed each other on the way unknown to each other, and so none of her lifelong Guntur companions was with Sister Mary at the end. However, two of the younger Indian Sisters from Guntur had left to attend a conference at Bangalore and they managed to arrive in time to represent Guntur at Sister Mary's deathbed. She must have had great joy in their presence, as it was for India and the Indians that she had given her life in Christ.

The Archbishop often came to see her in her final days and she liked to talk things over with him.

## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

Sister Mary was conscious to the end and, till she could no longer speak, joined in the prayers being said around her bed. She also thanked the nuns for their kindness.

Her last words were, "Jesus, Mary and Joseph" and "My Jesus, I love You", and she was able to kiss the Crucifix in her last moments. She died at 4 a.m. on Sunday, May 5, Good Shepherd Sunday, 1957. One of her last consolations was to have her Australian sister in religion, Sister Veronica (Dr. Pitt), as her devoted and efficient doctor.

The burial took place next day, at Bangalore. Many priests and the Sisters of different congregations were present at the final rites. The ceremonies were performed by Archbishop Thomas Pothacamury of Bangalore, assisted by the Archbishop of Hyderabad and a Vicar-General. They all followed the body to the graveyard.

On May 6, word of Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart's death having reached St. Joseph's Convent, Guntur, a Pontifical Requiem Mass for the repose of her soul was celebrated by His Lordship Rt. Rev. Ignatius Mummadi, D.D., Bishop of Guntur. In his sermon, sympathizing with the Sisters of Jesus, Mary, Joseph, the Bishop said that the departed Sister was a special creation of God. He spoke of her indefatigable labour for the sick and for souls, how her one thought was to lessen sin in the world and to ameliorate the sufferings of the sick and of how she had a special love for the poor. She had finished her life as a victim for souls and had then gone on her way to Paradise to enjoy her eternal reward.

### DEVELOPMENTS IN INDIA AND ELSEWHERE AFTER SISTER MARY'S DEATH

Did Mary Glowrey's influence end with her bodily death? Like that of all great minds certainly not. It is perhaps too early to see her long-range influence, for it is only a decade since her soul left this world. But there have been immediate developments which bear the mark of Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart Glowrey. There were projects begun before her passing that have now reached their fulfilment. The memory of the great good she did for the suffering people of

## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

the Guntur area heartens those same people and their families and the doctors and Sisters who have to carry on her work without her wise counsel to guide them in difficult crises. Many of them pray *to* her as well as *for* her eternal repose and feel that her prayers to Almighty God have already brought striking help where it was needed.

## AUSTRALIA

Before looking at the Indian developments since Sister Mary's death, however, let us see what happened in her native land, Australia.

Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart Glowrey had, all her life in India, longed for the establishment of her Order in Australia, and had interested her Superiors in her ideas. Members of her family who had seen its work in India first-hand had helped her to interest the Australian Hierarchy in it. Holland having suffered so much in World War Two, many Dutch people emigrated from it to Australia in the post-war years (and are still migrating for various reasons). The time therefore seemed opportune for the Dutch Order to make foundations in Australia.

Certain Dutch migrants in Australia had been acquainted with the Society of Jesus, Mary, Joseph in Holland and were anxious to have the nuns with them in their new country. Interest in the Society was shown in dioceses as far apart as Wilcannia Forbes (in the district of Broken Hill, N.S.W.) and Perth, W.A.

When the nuns of Jesus, Mary, Joseph did come to Australia it was to the Capital city of Australia, Canberra, A.C.T., that they came, through the efforts of His Grace, Most Rev. Eris O'Brien, D.D., Archbishop of Canberra-Goulburn, and the Ambassador for the Netherlands at Canberra.

In February, 1957, that is, before Sister Mary had died, while she was immobile on her bed praying and suffering, the Superior-General of the Society wrote to Archbishop O'Brien expressing her willingness to send Sisters to his diocese, saying, "Australia is attracting us". Were Sister Mary's prayers and penances affecting the founding of the Society in her native land? She had died before any more definite move was made.



## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

In July, 1957, Most Rev. Dr. O'Brien, on his way back from Ireland to Australia, visited the headquarters of the Society of Jesus, Mary, Joseph, then at Marienburg, Holland. He had known the Netherlands well when he had studied at the famed University of Louvain, so he was quite at home there. Apparently the bargain was clinched, as the saying is, between the Archbishop and the Mother General. Sister Mary was then only two months dead but it seems as if she had won the gift for Australia from the Good God.

In October, 1957, Reverend Mother Daniella, the Mother-General, and her First Assistant, Mother Leon, after visiting the Indonesian convents of the Society, flew to Australia to make arrangements for a foundation there.

At Darwin, in northern Australia (the Northern Territory), they were met by Sisters Veronica and Peter Julian from the Indian convents at Bangalore and Guntur respectively, who were beginning their first furlough visit to their native Australia. (This meeting had been planned, of course, for these two nuns, knowing Australia so well, would prove sound advisors to the two Dutch nuns.) They all flew to Sydney, the two groups in their separate planes, where they stayed awhile with the Sisters of Mercy, then Mother-General and her Assistant went on to Canberra, staying with the same Order there while they looked about for the best place for beginning a kindergarten and a primary school, with the idea of founding a secondary school later on. Sisters Veronica and Peter Julian went to Brisbane for a while.

Finally, they travelled to Melbourne and stayed at St. Vincent's Hospital, where Dr. Glowrey had worked in her youth. Sister Veronica was able to see the latest Australian medical improvements and Sister Peter Julian the latest in Pharmacy with a view to making use of them, if possible, in India. Both the Australian nuns were re-united with their families and friends there.

Archbishop Mannix of Melbourne — he was by then a nonagenarian but still retaining all the faculties that had made him one of the great men of the century — received them cordially and hoped they would make an establishment in the Archdiocese.

## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

Cardinal Gilroy, Archbishop of Sydney, also invited the Society there and Archbishop O'Brien thought they should also approach the Brisbane authorities. Several other members of the Hierarchy were anxious to have the nuns in their dioceses.

On their way home to Holland, Mother-General and Mother Leon visited their Indian convents. At Bangalore they went to Sister Mary's grave. In a letter written soon after, Mother Leon wrote: "Accompanied by Mother Jacqueline and all the other Mothers of our houses in India, we visited our beloved Sister Mary's grave. Sister Peter Julian placed flowers which she brought with her from Australia, and Mother-General placed a bouquet of fresh flowers from the Convent garden. We prayed there, thankful for her help on our journey and especially for the good help in our Australian undertaking. We experienced the good Sister Mary's help throughout our journey. It was her work."

Three years after Sister Mary's death, in March, 1960, the three Dutch pioneer Sisters reached Canberra to begin teaching there. They were Sisters Michael Kok, Cherubina Paauw and Aloysine Smeeing. These also stayed with the hospitable Sisters of Mercy till they had studied Australian customs and education sufficiently to be conversant with the work that lay ahead. Soon they were settled at the Holy Family Convent at Narrabundah, a suburb of Canberra, and their school quickly flourished with 400 children, boys and girls, receiving education there. On September 3, 1961, it was blessed by Archbishop O'Brien. In 1963, Reverend Mother Marie de Montfort, the Superior-General, accompanied by Rev. Mother Leon, one of her Assistants, came from Holland to visit it and stabilize the Society's work in Australia.

By March, 1964, two Sisters were in Melbourne, following a college course for a year to become better acquainted with Australian educational procedure. There was one novice in Canberra.

About the same time Mother Maria, one of the assistants of the Mother-General, visited Australia to choose a site in Melbourne for a second Australian foundation. The result was the

## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

Sacred Heart Convent at Blackburn South, about ten miles east of the city, in a new developing district towards the foothills of the Dandenong Ranges. Its name was given to commemorate, in her native land, the work of Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart Glowrey. There the nuns conduct the parish school. The convent and school were blessed by Bishop Fox, Auxiliary Bishop to Archbishop Simonds of Melbourne, successor to the late Archbishop Mannix.

A third house has since been opened at Mooroolbark, some miles north-east of Blackburn, at the foot of Mt. Dandenong. Early in 1966 a young Dutch Australian nun, one of the pioneer novices beforementioned, arrived at the Blackburn Convent immediately after her profession at the Narrabundah Novitiate of the Society. She was Sister Maria of the Sacred Heart, who took her religious name in emulation of Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart, Dr. Glowrey, for whom she showed great love and admiration. Thus history was made in Australia for the Society of Jesus, Mary, Joseph, and one of Dr. Glowrey's dreams came true.

## AFRICA

The inter-racial school and the Society's first hospital in South Africa were opened in 1961. Recently the Sisters have been managing a hostel for senior girls studying in a public High School and they are also teaching at that school at the special invitation of the Government. A third house has been opened in Geita for Social Service and medical work. It has now become a principle of the Society to work in a team with seculars or members of other Congregations, according to the need of the people.

## GUNTUR

What, meantime, had been going on at the scene of Dr. Glowrey's long labours in India? Guntur was saddened by her death but there had been a long warning that it was coming, and so St. Joseph's Hospital had tried to adapt itself to the new conditions. Lay women doctors, the chief of them Dr. Gladys Lobo, M.D., carried on where Sister Dr. Mary



## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

had left off. An Indian nun treble-certificated nurse, Sister Ancilla, who had worked for many years there, took charge of the staff. Sister Mary had great confidence in her. However, she suffered a rather similar illness to Sister Mary Glowrey's, though of shorter duration, and died early in 1964.

The lay doctors have continued the work very zealously and efficiently. The latest news is that the nuns at Guntur soon hope to have there a Sister Doctor who left India in 1958 and has been studying medicine at the Catholic University of Nijmegen in Holland. Four other Indian Sisters have also begun medical studies at the same university and two are doing the early part of their course at St. John's Medical College, Bangalore. Thus the example of the two pioneer Sister Doctors of the Society — Dr. Glowrey and Dr. Ethel Pitt — seems to be ensuring continuation of their missionary work.

In the years since Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart's death, St. Joseph's Hospital has progressed generally. Within a couple of years of 1957, the Hospital extended by acquiring another hospital block close by, and a cancer clinic with the necessary equipment Sister Mary had been dreaming of for years was established to complete the necessary requirements for the nursing training within St. Joseph's. She had specially wanted help for the cancer patients and her own cancer suffering seemed to win it for the hospital. Latest news of it tells of its twenty-five beds and an average of twelve in-patients, 2000 people being helped annually by the Deep X-Ray plant and many others by its Radium.

At the end of 1964, over 3000 operations were being done annually at St. Joseph's Hospital and there were a new laboratory and a Blood Bank. There were sixty nurses in training, twelve being Sisters of the Congregation. There were also fifteen Auxiliary Midwives — training for two years. St. Joseph's Hospital also had a special Children's Ward and also a Premature Ward for an average of sixteen babies.

The out-patients' attendance for the whole hospital year was, at the end of 1964, 49895, the in-patients were 8159, the babies born 1829. The beds numbered 170, the cradles sixty.

## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

In addition to the Hospital, the nuns have a small Health Centre, about four miles from Guntur, where the Sisters go for a few days each week to look after the extremely poor people of the area. They attend over 8000 patients annually. This Centre "is necessary also for the Auxiliary Nurses' Training—for the Domiciliary Nursing and Rural Health Work", writes a Sister from there. "Medical care in the villages is still primitive. Every year cholera and smallpox epidemics occur."

General education in the J.M.J. Society's schools at Guntur is flourishing. You remember Sister Mary's battles for it, her participation in it, in addition to her arduous medical work? The nuns teach at three levels—primary, secondary and tertiary. English is now included in courses. The Bachelor of Education College, Guntur, has 150 students, the Tenali J.M.J. College for the Bachelor of Arts and the Bachelor of Science courses has 265. Yet the Sister from Guntur remarks, "Only a drop in the ocean of need in India."

## ST. JOHN'S MEDICAL COLLEGE AND THE CATHOLIC HOSPITALS ASSOCIATION

Today, St. John's Medical College at Bangalore, Mysore, Southern India, is, apart from the material and spiritual results of her work at Guntur, the greatest memorial to Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart Glowrey.

It was mentioned before that the College opened in 1963. The students who came to it in that year, however, began with only a pre-medical course, in July of that year, and in a temporary building. In July, 1964, these fifty students set out on their first year of the Bachelor of Medicine course and so the College really began the work for which it had been founded. St. Martha's Hospital, conducted by the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, arranged as the basic teaching hospital for the first few years, was renovated and extended to make it more suitable for its purpose. It had been in existence for nearly 100 years. Later, the College hopes to have its own hospital at the College site.

## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

Finance was, of course, a great worry to those who established the College but some big donations to its funds did much to allay fears. Among them were such amounts as these:

30,000 (U.S.A.) dollars from the Sacred Propagation of the Faith;

\$172,000 from Misereor for the purchase of land;

\$85,000 from His Eminence the Cardinal of Vienna;

\$70,000 from the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Holland;

\$50,000 from His Eminence Cardinal Spellman of New York;

\$117,000 from collections in India;

\$28,000 from the Hierarchy of the United Kingdom.

The Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith agreed to give \$50,000 a year for the first ten years to help cover the recurring costs for that initial period. It is hoped to raise as much as \$1,000,000 in India over a period of a few years. The Indian Hierarchy was in charge of the planning for the Hospital developments and His Grace Most Rev. Dr. Thomas Pothacamury, Archbishop of Bangalore, has taken a prominent part in the planning.

His Holiness Pope John XXIII, as a mark of his approbation of the St. John's College project and its aims, had agreed to the College's being named after his Patron Saint and in his own honour. Hence its name.

His Eminence Cardinal Gracias, Archbishop of Bombay, was, of course, most interested, all through, in the progress of the College, and St. John's, through the permission of His Holiness, Pope Paul VI, was made the chief memorial of the Thirty-eighth International Eucharistic Congress at Bombay in November-December, 1964. The Foundation-stone for the permanent building was blessed by His Holiness at a special ceremony at the Bombay Eucharistic Congress on December 3, 1964, the Feast of St. Francis Xavier, that great Apostle of Eastern Asia, and soon after was taken to Bangalore. Latest news, in 1966, is that the permanent building has been begun. The first plan was too costly. The second has been approved and seems to be final.

Australians have added their mite to defraying costs. During 1966, Dr. John Billings and Mr. Frank Morgan, two well-known



## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

Victorian doctors, visited St. John's College and, on their return, gave it publicity in Australia. The medical staff of St. Vincent's Hospital, Melbourne, to which they are attached, has sent money donations and the Victorian branch of the Medical Guild of St. Luke a collection of books for the library. Donations which have been sent to Dr. Billings at St. Vincent's Hospital have been used to provide some items of medical equipment.

The Catholic Hospitals Association, which Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart Glowrey initiated, still functions zealously and still brings out its magazine, now named *MEDICAL SERVICE*. The Association took part in the Bombay Eucharistic Congress and Sister Mary's old colleague, Dr. Anna Dengel, now Mother-General of the Society of Catholic Medical Missionaries, which she founded in 1925, gave an address at it. She still leads a very busy, fruitful life, constantly touring from country to country to visit houses of her Society which has its headquarters in U.S.A.

Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart Glowrey left this world too soon to be included in the special Apostolic Blessing given by His Holiness, Pope Paul VI, to Cardinal Gracias and all those who, as the Pope said, would assist him "in this praise-worthy undertaking", the development of St. John's College. But by the time all in India and elsewhere were expressing their gratitude to Pope Paul, she must have long since received her heavenly reward from her Divine Master for her lifelong struggle to make the College a reality.

One feels that the College will never be forgotten in her prayers before the Throne of Almighty God, and that, because of them, united with the prayers of those still on earth who realize its importance, St. John's College will do countless good for the many millions of Indians of the future who will need the Christian medical aid of the doctors it will give them, lay and religious, for as many generations as we can imagine. May persecution never prevent it from functioning and may sister colleges arise, when they are needed, to supplement its work.

## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

### TRIBUTES TO SISTER MARY

In the brief space at disposal in this small booklet the foregoing is all that can be said of Dr. Mary Glowrey's life-work and its effects. There is room for but a few of the many tributes to her, both before and after her death by people who knew her in early or later life or who knew of the importance of the work she did and of her heroic sanctity. Probably, some day in the near future a more comprehensive appraisal of her life will be given in a full-scale biographical volume and in it the many tributes which cannot be included here may perhaps be read by the readers of all continents whose appetites for more details have been whetted by this little booklet.

One tribute of great significance was received by Sister Dr. Mary a few months before her death. She was nominated by the National Council of Catholic Women of America for a Federal Government honour as one of the outstanding leaders of Asia and was invited to visit the United States. Sister Mary was unable to accept the invitation because she was, by that time, a complete invalid. The worldly honour probably meant little to her as such but she possibly accepted it as a recognition of the actual work done which she regarded as urgent and satisfying for her Divine Master's sake.

Most of her Australian friends and acquaintances who paid tribute to her after her death remembered her chiefly as they saw her in her youth.

Thus Miss Anna Brennan, LL.B., who was at the University of Melbourne with Mary Glowrey and later worked with her on the pioneer committee of the Catholic Women's Social Guild, writing in the Guild's official journal, *THE HORIZON*, of July, 1957, stated that "hers was not a personality that immediately 'hit the eye'."

" 'A sweet girl', we remarked at an age when such a verdict was almost a disparagement. We in our assertive youth, our callow strength and assured wisdom were going to reform the world, not conform to it. We who are still talking to a world which seems singularly unimpressed with our eloquence

## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

thought her something of a mouse. Yet even then she was beginning as she meant to go on. It was only years afterwards that I learned," wrote Miss Brennan, "that her allowance of pocket-money went mostly into the pockets of the poor — those sad products of poverty and sickness which came into the ambit of a medical student's life."

In a letter to Sister Stanislaus, an old friend of Sister Mary in the Society of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, who had been the first Indian Superior of St. Joseph's Convent, Guntur, 1958-1962, Miss L. Philipsz, ex-Principal of the Lady Willingdon Training College, Madras, said, "Sister Mary's death has deprived not only your Community and your Congregation of a holy and saintly member, but also your district and, I should say, the whole country of one whose healing touch brought relief and comfort to thousands of suffering men and women. Hers was, indeed, a dedicated life — dedicated to the love and service of God and of His poor, suffering children. Great, indeed, will be her reward."

Mother Anna Dengel, S.C.M.M., in her letter of condolence to the Mother Superior of St. Joseph's Convent, Guntur, referred to Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart Glowrey's founding of the Catholic Hospitals Association and her insistence on the need of a Catholic Medical College. "It is, indeed, a great necessity which becomes clearer every day," she said, "although, at the time Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart advocated it, it required great vision."

There is the testimony of Rev. Fr. K. Peter, the Spiritual Director of St. Joseph's Convent, Guntur, for eleven years: "By faith and grace she" (i.e., Sister Mary) "inculcated in others who came in contact with her the inner life of the Holy Spirit that dominated her wisdom and work. Only very few can combine interior tenderness of love and exterior devotion in the discharge of their duties.

"As regards my personal opinion, without fear of contradiction I can say that Sister Mary led an inspired and angelic life."

The tributes of her Sisters in Religion who had known her very well, some for the whole time she had spent in India,



## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

were in the same vein. Mothers Stanislaus, Edwiga, Jacquellini, Arnoldi — Indian and Dutch nuns — and her fellow Australians — Sisters Veronica and Peter Julian — reinforced the remarks of others I have quoted.

### UNION WITH GOD

The secret of this indefatigable medical missionary's spiritual and material success would seem to lie in her close communion with the Heavenly Ones. Throughout her life she tried to submit as well as she knew how to the Will of Almighty God and was always conscious of her inadequacies. She was forever remembering the Patrons of her Society — Jesus, Mary and Joseph — and tried to model her life, where she could, on that of the Holy Family of Nazareth. Her name in religion was a constant reminder to her that she must always mirror the love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and that she must cling close to the Blessed Virgin Mary after whom she was doubly named, at baptism and as a nun. She sought frequent association with St. Joseph in prayer, for he was not only a patron of her Religious Order but the patron of the Guntur J.M.J. Convent and its hospital which was her heaviest responsibility.

She worshipped God in the Three Persons of the Holy Trinity — the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit — according to her soul's need. But perhaps her most frequent recourse was to the Holy Spirit for guidance in her life work.

A J.M.J. nun who knew her well over most of her life in religion says of Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart Glowrey, "On all occasions, and continuously, Sister Mary would ask each and everyone she met to pray to the Holy Spirit for her that she might receive special light to know what to do. How often one heard the remark: 'I do need the Light of the Holy Spirit very badly.' Our answer was: 'The poor Holy Spirit must be weary of you. You give Him no peace in solving your endless problems.' She would always smile and repeat the request."

The same Sister adds, "It is almost certain that Sister Mary never attempted anything and never finished anything without seeking the aid and guidance of the Holy Spirit. Such was

## AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL NUN IN INDIA.

her devotion to and union with Him in her daily work. This proved again and showed her deep humility in her realization that without the gift of the Holy Spirit she could do nothing, but with Him she could attempt all things. She did attempt the impossible at all times and she tried to inspire others to attempt them also”.

### CONCLUSION

Here, then, is this very brief history of Dr. Mary Glowrey, Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart's life and of the memorials that have lived on after her. For all that has had to be left unsaid the writer apologizes. Space has been the chief cause of omissions. A full book biography must follow before long and it must be written by someone who really saw her work in India over many years, and must fill the gaps left here.

In Dr. Glowrey's early days in Australia, when the Very Rev. Fr. Lockington, S.J., persuaded her to become the first President of the Catholic Women's Social Guild of Victoria, the Guild motto, "She Hath Put Out Her Hand To Strong Things", taken from the Book of Proverbs in the Old Testament of the Bible, was on all Guild members' lips. The young First President thought of it, probably, as applying to all the Guild members, she herself just one of the many, and to others more than to her. She did not realize how perfectly it could be applied to her herself, in particular, when her life on Earth had ended and the world could view it as a whole.

Sister Mary had all the attributes of the Valiant Woman. Though the original Valiant Woman was a wife and mother and Sister Mary a virgin, Sister Dr. Mary, as she was so often called by those around her, was the Spiritual Spouse of Christ, and the people of India were her children and household helps. She mothered them; she saved lives and souls. And they, her spiritual children, "are the first to call her blessed". From Heaven and Earth they praise her, for they, more than any other human beings, have had reason to be grateful to her.

Nihil Obstat:

AUSTIN KELLY, S.J.,  
Diocesan Censor.

Imprimatur:

✠ ARTHUR F. FOX,  
Vicar General.

17-5-1967.





Original Plan of  
St. John's Medical  
College, Bangalore, India